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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN ANGOLA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 1180 (1998) of 29 June 1998, in which the Council, inter alia, requested me to submit a report by 7 August 1998 with recommendations regarding the United Nations involvement in Angola, taking into account the safety and freedom of movement of personnel of the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA) and the status of the peace process. It covers developments since my last report of 17 June 1998 (S/1998/524).

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

2. After two months of frustrating delays, the Angolan Government and the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) held high-level consultations in Andulo on 18 and 19 June 1998, which led to a number of understandings, including an agreement to return all government authorities and UNITA party functionaries to the areas they had recently left. However, at the meeting, UNITA again failed to set specific dates for the extension of state administration to its four strongholds of Andulo, Bailundo, Mungo and N'Harea, although four joint Government/UNITA technical groups visited the areas on 19 June and completed the necessary preparatory work.

3. Shortly before his tragic death, my Special Representative, Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, held intensive consultations with President José Eduardo dos Santos and the UNITA leader, Mr. Jonas Savimbi, in order to ensure the timely extension of state administration to these four localities and the earliest completion of the Lusaka Protocol (S/1994/1441, annex). On 22 June 1998, Mr. Beye met in Andulo with Mr. Savimbi, who reiterated his earlier promise to proceed with normalization before 30 June. Accordingly, and with the consent of the Government of Angola, on 24 June, the Security Council adopted resolution 1176 (1998), by which it postponed, until 1 July 1998, the entry into force of the additional measures stipulated in resolution 1173 (1998), dated 12 June 1998.

4. On 26 June 1998, Mr. Beye left Luanda to consult with several leaders of the region, in yet another effort to move the Angolan peace process forward. After holding consultations with the Presidents of Gabon and Togo, his aircraft crashed 16 kilometres north-east of Abidjan airport, while making an approach to land. All eight people on board, including Mr. Beye, five MONUA staff and two pilots, tragically lost their lives in the accident. The death of Mr. Beye occurred at a critical phase in the peace process. I immediately asked the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Bernard Miyet, to travel to Angola to reaffirm the United Nations commitment to the peace process. Mr. Miyet, who visited Angola from 29 June to 3 July, held intensive consultations with all parties concerned, including the Angolan Prime Minister, Mr. Van Dunem, and Mr. Savimbi. I designated the MONUA Force Commander, Major-General Seth Kofi Obeng, Officer-in-Charge of the Mission and temporarily assigned my Representative and Regional Humanitarian Adviser to the Great Lakes, Mr. Berhanu Dinka, as Senior Political Adviser to MONUA. I have also maintained active contacts with the parties, both in writing and through telephone conversations, urging them to exercise restraint and to take concrete steps to avoid the further deterioration of the situation in the country.

5. At the request of Mr. Savimbi, Major-General Obeng travelled to Andulo on 8 July to hold discussions on ways and means to stabilize the security situation and to resume the extension of state administration, particularly in the four strategic localities. The UNITA leader expressed his readiness to implement the measures agreed upon on 18 and 19 June, and suggested that MONUA should reopen a number of its team sites to assist in re-establishing cooperation between the two parties on the ground. Mr. Savimbi also indicated that strict instructions had been given to all UNITA members to ensure the safety of all international personnel. Major-General Obeng offered to facilitate discussions on this and other issues within the framework of the Joint Commission, and requested UNITA urgently to send back to Luanda the head of its delegation, who had regrettably been absent from the capital for almost two months. Furthermore, the absence of senior UNITA representatives from the recently inaugurated party headquarters at Luanda has had a negative impact on the peace process.

6. Subsequently, UNITA was repeatedly asked by the Joint Commission to establish dates for the transfer of the four localities to the Government's control. However, in response, it linked any consideration of such dates to the re-establishment of its party structures where, it claimed, they had been dismantled. On 24 July 1998, MONUA, in consultation with the representatives of the three observer States (Portugal, the Russian Federation and the United States of America), presented to the parties a new timetable aimed at facilitating the extension of state administration to UNITA strongholds by 13 August 1998. However, despite strenuous efforts by MONUA and the observers to the peace process, no agreement could be reached on that plan.

7. The reporting period has been marked by the absence of any sustained dialogue between the Government and UNITA, as well as by the intensification of hostile propaganda, which has further deepened the mutual mistrust. UNITA claimed that, from April to June 1998, the Angolan National Police (ANP) had killed 263 of UNITA members and sympathizers. It also asserted that the Government was attempting to dismantle its party, and had so far eliminated its structures in 212 out of the 272 localities where state administration had been

extended. For its part, the Government accused UNITA of trying to make the country ungovernable by reoccupying over 70 localities, which were earlier transferred to the Government's authority, and by killing hundreds of government functionaries and civilians and displacing tens of thousands of people.

8. On 21 July 1998, the Angolan Parliament adopted a resolution condemning the actions of UNITA and recommending that the Government take decisive steps to stop the armed conflict and consider taking measures regarding the participation of UNITA members in state institutions. A few days later, the UNITA Political Committee issued a communiqué insisting that the extension of state administration should be linked to the return of UNITA functionaries to all locations from which they had been expelled and the end of abuses perpetrated by ANP. At the summit of the Portuguese-speaking countries held at Praia, President dos Santos stated that Angola was in a state of "undeclared war" and requested the assistance of the international community. In particular, the Government has intensified contacts with the States members of the Southern African Development Community, which recently urged the international community to impose new measures against UNITA and called on Mr. Savimbi not to "prolong the suffering" of the Angolan people.

III. MILITARY AND SECURITY ASPECTS

9. The military and security situation in the country has further deteriorated and the risks of a resumption of full-scale hostilities have increased significantly. UNITA forces have continued to threaten the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) and the national police in Lunda Sul, Lunda Norte, Moxico, Uige and Cuanza Norte Provinces. Evidently, UNITA has maintained a significant military capability, despite its past declarations on the demilitarization of its forces. On many occasions, UNITA "residual" troops have been identified as being responsible for attacks on villages and most recently towns, as well as ambushes on major roads. There have also been incidents of selective killing and kidnapping in order to intimidate the population and dissuade it from cooperating with government authorities.

10. Government-controlled diamond-mining areas have also been attacked, in particular in the north-eastern region, and renewed minelaying activities have been reported. MONUA confirmed that, on 21 July 1998, over 100 civilians were massacred by unidentified elements in Bula, Lunda Norte Province. At the same time, statements by FAA and ANP and media reports have contributed to the spread of rumours and exaggerated stories about fighting in the provinces.

11. On the other hand, it is reported that FAA troops have started laying protective minefields around their positions in the Huambo, Saurimo and Luena regions. Furthermore, the Government has mobilized FAA and has embarked on forced conscription. Its troops are also demonstrating force by carrying out military training and live firing practices around population centres. At the same time, acts of violence perpetuated against UNITA supporters by the ANP and FAA have increased and many UNITA members have left government-controlled areas because of this harassment. Deployment of FAA and ANP forces has also caused the temporary closure of several airports and severely curtailed free movement of people.

12. The recent developments have seriously affected the activities of MONUA, which continues to monitor and investigate allegations, despite the lack of cooperation and increased restrictions imposed on its activities by both parties. As a precautionary measure, in June and July 1998, MONUA relocated 19 of its 44 team sites to safer areas, and modified its concept of operation, laying more emphasis on the provision of security to unarmed military and police observers and on the conducting of patrols and convoys. Despite all such precautions, UNITA cadres attempted to obstruct the relocation of the United Nations teams from Cazombo (Moxico Province), Mavinga and Jamba (Luando Lubango Province). The United Nations team site in Luau (Moxico Province) had to redeploy into the Democratic Republic of the Congo when the town came under UNITA attack on 14 June 1998. In addition, a United Nations helicopter transporting an investigation team was shot at by unidentified armed elements while attempting to land in Toto (Uige Province) on 7 July 1998.

13. Owing to the prevailing insecurity, the downsizing of MONUA's military component has been temporarily suspended in accordance with Security Council resolution 1180 (1998) of 29 June 1998. However, the Portuguese logistic company of 93 personnel was repatriated in July, as requested by its national authorities. The Mission is thus left with a total number of 728 military personnel, composed of 414 troops belonging to three infantry companies, 185 military support personnel, 37 staff officers and 92 military observers (see annex I).

IV. POLICE ASPECTS

14. The civilian police (CIVPOL) observers continue to monitor ANP activities in an attempt to ensure its neutrality, especially in the areas where Government control has been extended. They also monitor security arrangements for the UNITA leaders in Luanda, as well as the incorporation of Mr. Savimbi's security detachment into ANP. Of the 400 personnel officially belonging to that detachment, 117 were formally inducted into ANP in Andulo on 27 June 1998. The remaining personnel, who are reportedly deployed outside Andulo, were to be incorporated later. CIVPOL observers also conducted frequent patrols and visits to prisons and other detention centres and, together with human rights observers (see sect. V below), monitored the human rights situation.

15. Very little progress has been achieved in the collection of weapons from the civilian population; with the spread of insecurity, that important activity has virtually ceased. Very often, information concerning search operations were provided to MONUA only after the exercise had been carried out by ANP. The verification of the activities of bandits, including attacks on United Nations personnel and property, has been conducted with difficulty, since full cooperation from the government authorities or UNITA has not always been forthcoming.

16. The planned opening of five new CIVPOL team sites has been postponed because of the deteriorating security situation. However, in an attempt to enhance confidence and to reassure the local population, regular patrols of United Nations police officers are being carried out to the temporarily closed team sites. Furthermore, enhanced mobile investigative units that can visit

problem areas on short notice have been established in Luanda and in the six regional headquarters.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS

17. The human rights situation is lamentable. It is marked by extrajudicial executions, torture, arbitrary arrest and detention and severely restricted freedom of movement. The abuses have contributed to spreading fear among the population and have led to an increase in the number of internally displaced persons and of villages abandoned because of real or possible attacks. The high toll of casualties inflicted by UNITA residual forces and unidentified armed elements included women and children, Sobas (traditional leaders), local Government administrators and their families, as well as ANP officers.

18. At the same time, a significant number of abuses were committed against UNITA officials and sympathizers as well as UNITA demobilized soldiers, including arbitrary arrest and detention, torture or ill-treatment and harassment. In some cases, ANP asserted that they were arresting and detaining people on the grounds that they were UNITA members. Abuses have also occurred in the course of the recruitment drive by FAA, which it continues to deny. It should be noted that because of the restrictions on MONUA's freedom of movement, the Mission did not have access to certain areas to investigate the reported forced recruitment of civilians into UNITA's troops.

19. The present human rights situation underlines the need to continue to strengthen human rights activities, which can contribute to the promotion of confidence-building in the country by strengthening institutions necessary for post-conflict reconstruction, while also addressing allegations of individual human rights violations. Despite many difficulties and hesitations, there appears to be a willingness in Luanda and provincial capitals, as well as adequate opportunities, to strengthen the rule of law. This important activity will obviously require considerable assistance from the international community.

VI. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

A. Relief and rehabilitation

20. The worsening security conditions in Angola have had a severe impact on the humanitarian situation.

21. Since March 1998, almost 120,000 persons have been confirmed as being internally displaced. However, unconfirmed reports of new, larger numbers of internally displaced cannot be verified owing to the lack of safe access. The total of internally displaced in Angola is estimated at a staggering 1.3 million persons, which represents over 10 per cent of the country's population. In addition, thousands of Angolans have fled the country for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An influx of Angolan refugees has also been reported in Zambia and Namibia.

22. The humanitarian community's access to affected populations has been severely impeded by the spreading crisis and the attacks on its members in some areas of the country. Representatives of United Nations humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations in the field have been advised to restrict their movements and to remain mostly in provincial capitals. That has led to a substantial decrease in the number of missions to assess and monitor the humanitarian situation and to distribute relief assistance. Given those constraints, the humanitarian agencies can now provide food assistance to only 50 per cent of the newly displaced. Moreover, the withdrawal of some of MONUA's formed military units that previously provided escorts to humanitarian missions has curtailed many regular activities in the provinces.

23. A recent outbreak of meningitis in some regions, which has also affected the internally displaced population, is an additional concern of the humanitarian community, which has to obtain sufficient medical supplies and then find secure routes to access the affected populations.

24. It appears that the erosion of confidence in the peace process has also adversely affected donors' response to the 1998 Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal. So far, United Nations agencies have received only 36.7 per cent of the total of $91,200,142 requested for this year. The lack of sufficient funding threatens the continuation of some of the important programmes conducted by the United Nations agencies and the International Organization for Migration. Food aid, basic health services, essential relief and survival items are in short supply. The newly displaced population further increases the pressures on the already stretched resources of the humanitarian community.

25. As a result of the prevailing conditions, the much anticipated transition from relief-oriented programmes to recovery and rehabilitation programmes has to be postponed. It is evident that, without a substantial improvement in the security environment, more civilians will be affected by the violence and that Angola's hope to rapidly resume developmental activities will have been dashed.

B. Demobilization and reintegration

26. The demobilization of approximately 6,000 FAA military war-disabled personnel has not begun, pending provision by the Government of the necessary information about their locations and the availability of sufficient funds. The funding requirements for this important project is estimated at US$ 2.5 million.

27. As of July 1998, almost 34,000 out of 49,851 formally demobilized soldiers were registered with the National Institute for the Socio-Professional Reintegration of Ex-combatants and the counselling and referral services. Approximately 3,000 demobilized ex-combatants participated in quick impact projects and another 2,000 former soldiers were associated with vocational training programmes. At the same time, the implementation of the reintegration programme has been severely affected by the overall security situation in their country. Furthermore, the recently conducted outreach programme to rural areas has also been restricted to the accessible provinces. In the meantime, an independent evaluation of the reintegration programme, in which the Government participated, recommended that the mandate of the programme be extended to the

soldiers demobilized during the 1991-1992 peace process; and that a regional, rather than provincial, approach be introduced. It was also recommended that the overall time-frame be extended until the end of 1999 and the programme be implemented only in the areas where security conditions permit. Immediate funding requirements for this project amount to US$ 6 million.

C. Demining

28. Severe financial constraints, as well as the security situation, continued to hamper the implementation of the demining programmes in Angola. The lack of sufficient and timely donor contributions to the Special Trust Fund has resulted in the cessation of the training of new national demining teams and in the substantive reduction of the operational capacity of the seven existing brigades of deminers. These factors have led to the suspension of demining activities in some locations, which was compounded by shortages of transportation. The equipment currently used by the Angolan demining programme was originally purchased by the United Nations Angola Verification Mission III for the establishment of a national demining capacity. The transfer of this equipment from MONUA to the demining programme operating under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) would facilitate the continuation of the programme. Accordingly, I intend to recommend to the General Assembly the donation of the necessary equipment to the United Nations Office for Project Services demining programme in Angola as part of the downsizing of MONUA. In consultation and agreement with the Government, UNDP intends to carry out a comprehensive review of the mine action programme in Angola during August and September 1998. In the meantime, immediate funding of the programme requirements for 1998 amount to US$ 3.4 million.

VII. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

29. The macroeconomic problems facing the Angolan economy are marked by increasing inflation, rapidly fluctuating foreign exchange rates and the Government's expenditure which is focused mainly on the payment of wages. Foreign currency exchange for normal business transactions has not been available through the national banks and new investment was made only in the oil sector. Economic instability has been compounded by a persistent budget deficit. Despite the efforts to contain the high inflation rates, prices of goods and services remain very high for the average consumer and the country once again appeared to be on the threshold of hyperinflation. Foreign exchange rates on the parallel market have recently escalated from 400,000 new kwanzas (NKz) to 580,000 NKz to one United States dollar, which represents nearly twice the official exchange rate. Because of Angola's heavy dependence on imported goods, market prices of these items have risen simultaneously with the current rates of exchange on the parallel market, thus further fuelling inflation.

30. Angola's economic difficulties have recently been exacerbated by the low price of oil on the world market. The Government has, therefore, been compelled to revise downwards its projections about the growth of the economy and has had to make serious adjustments to the current budget. This notwithstanding, the budget deficit is likely to increase considerably.

31. In the meantime, the Government intends to pursue discussions with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in August 1998, concerning a possible IMF-monitored structural adjustment programme. Partly because of the delays in the peace process, support provided to the implementation of the National Community Rehabilitation Programme has fallen far short of the level of pledges made at the 1995 Round Table Conference held at Brussels.

32. The support of socio-economic recovery continues to be one of the main objectives and areas of activities of the United Nations agencies and programmes. UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund all participate in these activities according to their mandates and means. The current security situation in the country has gravely hampered the proper implementation of the long-term United Nations programmes, as well as the activities of international non-governmental organizations and bilateral donors.

VIII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

33. By its resolution 52/8 C of 26 June 1998, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of US$ 43.6 million gross, equivalent to US$ 10.9 million gross per month, for the operation of MONUA for the period from 1 July to 31 October 1998. The assessment of these amounts is subject to the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Mission beyond 15 August 1998. Therefore, should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of MONUA, as recommended in paragraph 39 below, the cost of maintaining the Mission until 15 September 1998 would be met from the amounts appropriated by the General Assembly in resolution 52/8 C.

34. As at 31 July 1998, unpaid assessed contributions to the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM)/MONUA special account amounted to US$ 87 million. The total of outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $1.5 billion.

IX. OBSERVATIONS

35. Regrettably, since my last report, there has been no improvement in the already deplorable situation in Angola. The country continues to drift towards full-fledged hostilities, despite the renewed efforts of the international community to avoid a precipitous turn of events.

36. I strongly urge the Government and UNITA to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from any steps which would further exacerbate the present situation, since this may destroy the difficult gains achieved in the peace process. I am most disturbed by the failure of UNITA to demobilize fully its forces and to facilitate the extension of state administration throughout the country, requirements which are the pillars of the Lusaka Protocol. These crucial obligations, as well as other major undertakings, must be fulfilled without further delay. UNITA also must stop its attacks against government-

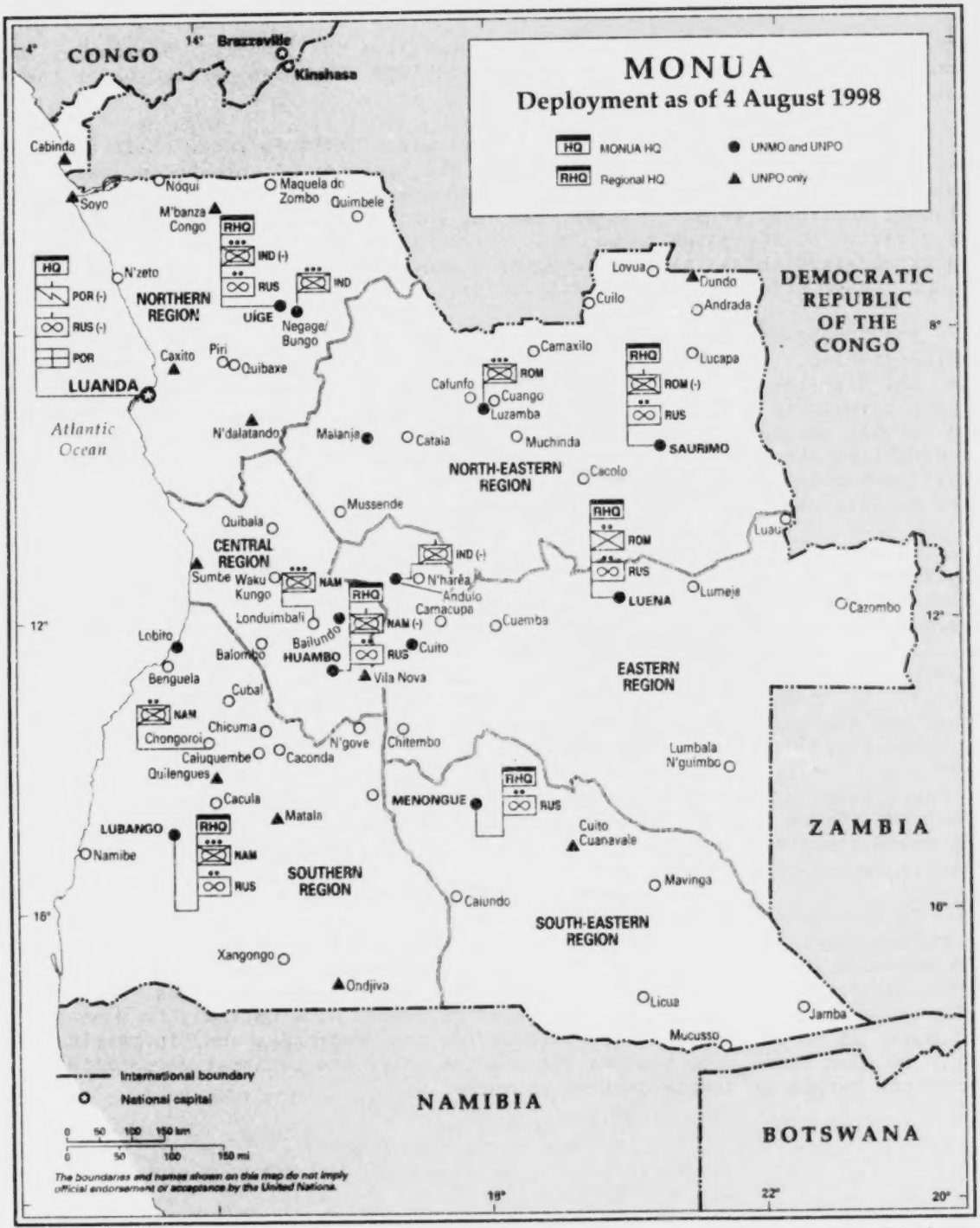
controlled areas and other attempts to destabilize the country. Similarly, ANP must refrain from practices inconsistent with its status as defined under the Lusaka Protocol.

37. I call on the Government and, in particular, UNITA to renew their efforts towards national reconciliation, to cease the exchange of threats and war rhetoric and to initiate immediately confidence-building measures, both at the national and local levels. These measures should include the expeditious reactivation of the joint mechanisms in the provinces. Needless to say, practical steps should also be taken to disengage the military forces on the ground, under effective MONUA verification.

38. For the peace process to be restored, all these steps require urgent implementation. However, genuine and meaningful dialogue will only be possible when the high-level UNITA representatives return to Luanda and participate constructively in the work of the Joint Commission. As soon as the above steps are carried out and the security situation improves, MONUA will be prepared to re-establish its presence in key locations throughout the country in order to facilitate cooperation and promote confidence. Alternatively, the United Nations will be compelled to reconsider its deployment on the ground.

39. In the meantime, I reaffirm the willingness of the United Nations to continue to help the Angolan people, provided there is an unequivocal commitment of the Government and UNITA to the peaceful resolution of the crisis on the basis of the Lusaka Protocol. Having the above in mind, I decided to send Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi to Angola as my Special Envoy. He will assess the various aspects of the situation in the country and advise me on the possible course of action. Mr. Brahimi, who arrived at Luanda on 31 July 1998, was received by President dos Santos on 3 August and by Mr. Savimbi in Andulo the following day. My Special Envoy will also consult with the Governments of neighbouring countries. He is expected to complete his assessment mission in approximately 10 days, after which I will be in a better position to make recommendations about the future role of the United Nations in Angola. In the meantime, I recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of MONUA for one month, that is, until 15 September 1998.

40. In conclusion, I would like, once again, to pay tribute to the ultimate sacrifice of Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, the five MONUA staff and the two pilots who perished in the aircraft accident on 26 June. The untimely death of the MONUA colleagues represents an incalculable loss for their families, for the international community and for the cause of peace. The best way to honour Mr. Beye, in memory, therefore, would be for the Government and, in particular, UNITA to work resolutely towards the genuine peace and national reconciliation, which the people of Angola deserve so much.



Map No. 4016 Rev. 7 UNITED NATIONS
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